



## **Workforce Planning Training**

### **Identifying Key Challenges**

#### **Thoughts from Training classes**



The following information is a compilation of input gathered from the participants throughout the Workforce Planning training sessions OSER hosted. This list is a resource which includes ideas that were shared during the training and may be useful to managers to review when conducting workforce planning.

1. How will you identify challenges? What criteria will single out challenges that we need to focus on?
  - Talk to key persons involved.
  - Identify who we have, where they are, are they likely to retire and are they happy; document their knowledge.
  - Identify the function of those people (likely to retire) in the division.
  - Identify the needs of the agency and the consumers we serve.
  - Analyze trends (numbers and data)—identify areas of high turnover; why do young employees leave? Could it be related to shifts, poor jobs, locations, etc.? (Collecting data to analyze will be a challenge in itself.)
  - Identify positions that cannot be filled after advertising.
  - Analyze demographics.
  - Analyze factors: future programs, retiring programs, funds, position authority, politics, technological advances.
  - Study why people stay in the state workforce—where can we improve?
  - How do we recruit? At-risk vs. new.
  - Prioritize work statutorily.
  - Analyze new technology.
  - Identify training needs, time and resources required to provide.
  - Identify current and future mission.
  - Do a high-level review of common challenges.
  - Identify/gather what data we need to analyze.
  - Getting managers to look at the big picture (both agency- and state-wide).
  - Perform job analyses—identify what we need to retain and what we can let go.
  - Conduct/analyze exit interviews.
  - Survey workforce.
  - Collect feedback from interview panels.

2. Give examples of challenges you think may emerge.
  - People we hire are experts/professionals with experience and may therefore be close to retirement.
  - “Hangers-on” aren’t ready to retire so it’s hard to bring in young talent.
  - Many leave state service because of the lack of opportunity to develop a career in state service. The civil service system is problematic.
  - Concentration of retirement eligible employees.
  - Pay; no merit incentives; pay for high skills; pay compression.
  - Private sector competition.
  - Lag in technology.
  - The civil service process (cumbersome hiring process).
  - Technological advance—keeping up with technologies.
  - Future programs and retiring.
  - No positions to work with.
  - Fewer middle managers to train people.
  - Budget cuts and layoffs cause loss of institution knowledge and less people to do the work.
  - Retirement appears to be a chain reaction (when one goes, others also decide to go—no one wants to be the one left doing all the work).
  - Not enough resources to get the job done.
  - Fear of the process from staff.
  - Less experienced staff.
  - Morale in state—layoffs, cuts cause stress, employees are overworked; benefits are decreasing and pay isn’t increasing; promotional/growth opportunities are minimal; the state is a less stable environment; there is less appeal in working for the state.
  - State image—lack of excitement for younger workers.
  - Heavier workloads.
  - Don’t have enough positions to get the job done.
  - Lack of budget.
  - Employees resistance to change (possibly changing their roles and job duties).
  - Dependency on federal dollars.
  - Changing attitudes and interests on the generation entering the workforce.
  - State government is slow to adapt.
  
3. In considering these challenges, also consider what your agency has tried in the past to address challenges and what has worked so far.
  - Interview with all mid-managers and above.
  - Stipends for training.
  - Exit Interviews.
  - Mentoring—training.
  - Creating a safe place.
  - Case coordinator—reshuffle duties.
  - Advanced hire and job shadow.
  - Add-ons, sign-on bonuses (for Healthcare).
  - Targeting recruitments.
  - Localized training.
  - Involve staff in planning.

- Prep successors, back-filling.
- Strategic planning.
- Leadership programs.
- Cross training—build it into the position descriptions.
- Utilizing technology to make processes more efficient.
- Offering flexibility (e.g., part time schedules, work from home, etc.).
- Work with other agencies to combine resources.
- Develop detailed manuals that identify work processes (including flow charts).
- Hire at the entry level—"grow your own."
- Develop pathways for advancement.
- Outsourcing/using contractors.

### **Developing Strategies**

1. After identifying challenges (from the previous page), what are some possible strategies that could address these challenges?

- Know your workers, when they will move/retire or otherwise leave.
- Do a skills inventory and gap analysis.
- Know agency vulnerabilities in staffing.
- Collect & analyze data including exit interview data; do focus groups.
- Implement individual plans, career development, focus on portable skills, cross-training, at least two deep, mentoring, peer advising, training, resume development, job shadowing.
- Prioritizing needs on continuing basis.
- Paid Internships.
- Leadership training (geared toward non-supervisors and leaders).
- College \$/service years.
- Recruit nationally.
- Document knowledge and work.
- Analyze who is our market (recruitment pool)—allow for alternative work schedules, work at home, part-time, telecommuting.
- Analyze tools that employees need.
- Implement a team approach.
- Ask for federal dollars for recruitment—pay for college—paid back in service.
- Identify the market of new employees; identify what's important to them and structure the workplace to accommodate.
- Realize we must do "less with less" (reductions, retirements).
- Look at closing locations.
- Give people the right tools for the job.
- Listen to your employees.
- Funding of pool coded position to backfill retirement vacancies to allow time for training or hiring back staff as LTES.
- Develop a DCA strategy for jobs.
- Tuition reimbursement.
- Regional pay differentials; allow for location based pay incentives.
- Create a new program to hire back employees who retire for consulting.
- Develop non-traditional work patterns.
- Recruit in advance.

- Ensure buy-in from decision makers in Exec/Legislative branches.
- Increase benefits for new hires.
- Allow for promotion from within.
- Make adjustments to work process/structure which may include changes to the requirements of some classifications.
- Develop recruitment plans (including ways to attract people in other areas).
- Offer partner benefits.
- Build a Milwaukee-based state facility.
- Look at other recruitment sources—include retired military personnel.
- Share staff across state agencies (shared services).
- Implement morale building activities.
- Focus on/analyze big picture needs (e.g., rather than identifying the need to more people in a specific class, identify the need for more people with technical school training).
- Increase ability to transfer to other jobs.
- Provide health insurance immediately upon hire.
- Streamline the hiring process.
- Establish equity between new hires and current staff.
- Request position authority.
- Offer incentive programs to bring people into the state.
- Reward based on performance rather than seniority.
- Aggressively market state service (“branding”).